

Sinclair Broadcast Group's recent actions have illustrated the dangers to localism caused by media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Moreover, SBG's insisting that its plan to air an anti-Kerry propaganda piece and call it news is an abuse of the public's interest. It is a perfect example as to why we need the "equal time" rule to be reinstituted by the FCC.

Stop being a paper tiger! The FCC operates as an administrative expense jettisoned off the broadcast industry's profit and loss statements. The industry gets the benefit of the FCC's catering to it, but the American taxpayer is paying for the FCC. This is just too much of a win-win for the FCC and the industry. The taxpayer gets kicked in the teeth again.